

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USMISSION NATO

INFO ALL NATO CAPITALS

AMEMBASSY VALLETTA

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

USNMR SHAPE

USCINCEUR

USDOCOSOUTH

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 129411

USEEC

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: NATO, PFOR, MT, IT, FR

SUBJECT: NATO AND MALTA; MAY 24 MEETING

REFS: A) NATO 4110, 261213Z MAY 77 B) VALLETTA 568,
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(NOTAL) D) STATE 301003, 102142Z DEC 76 (NOTAL) E) STATE
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039094, 211837Z FEB 77 (NOTAL)

1. THERE IS NO REASON TO CHANGE NOW THE BASIC LINES
OF OUR PRESENT STANCE REGARDING US ASSISTANCE TO MALTA.
2. ACCORDINGLY, MISSION SHOULD EXPRESS TO LUNS AND
OTHER ALLIES AS APPROPRIATE OUR POSITION ALONG FOLLOWING

LINES:

(A) AS WE HAVE SAID PREVIOUSLY, MALTA'S ECONOMIC PROBLEMS ARE NOT AND SHOULD NOT BECOME A COLLECTIVE CONCERN OF NATO. NATO'S INTEREST IN MALTA IS DENYING IT TO THE USSR. GIVEN MINTOFF'S FIRM STANCE AGAINST EITHER "SUPERPOWER" HAVING ACCESS TO MALTA, HIS FLEXIBILITY VIS-A-VIS THE USSR IS SEVERELY LIMITED.

(B) WE HAVE NO DIFFICULTY WITH THE POSITIONS FRANCE AND ITALY HAVE TAKEN REGARDING MALTA'S NEUTRALITY.

(C) WE ARE COGNIZANT OF MALTA'S DIFFICULT ECONOMIC FUTURE AND WE ARE SYMPATHETIC.

(D) OUR CURRENT PAYMENTS TO MALTA ARE IN THE CONTEXT OF A NATO PAYMENTS ARRANGEMENT WHICH WILL BE ENDING. WE ARE, HOWEVER, PREPARED TO ENCOURAGE INVESTMENT IN MALTA AND OTHER RELATED EFFORTS WHICH COULD EASE THE MALTESE ECONOMIC DILEMMA.

(E) WE NOTE THAT SEVERAL ALLIES ARE DISCUSSING AID TO MALTA AND WE THINK THIS IS APPROPRIATE, AS IS WHATEVER CONSIDERATION THE EC AS A BODY MAY GIVE TO THE MALTESE SITUATION, GIVEN MALTA'S LONG AND GEOGRAPHICALLY NATURAL RELATIONSHIP WITH EUROPE.

CHRISTOPHER

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